

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1        1. A handheld computer system, comprising:
  - 2            a switch;
  - 3            a user interface;
  - 4            a housing; and
  - 5            a display supported by the housing, wherein the user
  - 6            interface includes an information entry area, wherein the information entry
  - 7            area is activated in response to manipulation of the switch the switch
  - 8            being a non-display element.
- 1        2. The handheld computer system of claim 1, wherein the
- 2            information entry area is deactivated in response to manipulation of the
- 3            switch.
- 1        3. The handheld computer system of claim 2 wherein the
- 2            switch includes two actions: a first manipulation of the switch to
- 3            activate the information entry area and a second manipulation of the
- 4            switch to deactivate the information entry area.
- 1        4. The handheld computer system of claims 1, 2, or 3 wherein
- 2            the switch is part of a touch pad associated with the display, a squeeze
- 3            switch associated with the housing, or a button associated with the
- 4            housing.
- 1        5. The handheld computer system of claims 1, 2, or 3 wherein
- 2            the switch is a squeeze switch.
- 1        6. The handheld computer system of claims 1, 2, or 3 wherein
- 2            the information entry area is a pop-up menu.

1           7.     The handheld computer system of claims 1, 2, or 3 wherein  
2     the information entry area has at least two sizes when activated.

1           8.     A user interface for a handheld computer system, the  
2     handheld computer system comprising a display and a touch pad, the user  
3     interface comprising:

4                 means for receiving information at the touch pad and the  
5     display; and

6                 means for activating and deactivating the means for  
7     receiving, wherein the means for receiving is reduced in size or removed  
8     from the display when deactivated and the means for activating and  
9     deactivating is not located on the display.

1           9.     The user interface means of claim 8 wherein the means for  
2     receiving is at least one of a graffiti area, a pictorial representation of a  
3     keyboard, an area to accept a drawing, and an area assigned for entering  
4     information into the handheld computer system.

1           10.    The user interface means of claim 8 wherein the handwritten  
2     characters include numbers or letters.

1           11.    The user interface means of claim 9 wherein the handwritten  
2     characters include numbers or letters.

1           12.    The user interface of claim 8 wherein the means for receiving  
2     is removed from the display when activated.

1           13.    The user interface of claims 9, 10, 11, or 12 wherein the  
2     means for activating and deactivating includes a squeeze switch.

1        14. The user interface of claims 9, 10, 11, or 12 wherein the  
2 means for activating and deactivating is integrated into a portion of a  
3 housing of the handheld computer.

1        15. The user interface of claims 13 wherein the means for  
2 activating and deactivating is integrated into a portion of a housing of the  
3 handheld computer.

1        16. The user interface of claim 14 wherein the means for  
2 activating and deactivating includes a symbol.

1        17. The user interface of claim 14 wherein the means for  
2 activating and deactivating includes a symbol is a fixed symbol.

1        18. A method of interfacing with a handheld computer system,  
2 the handheld computer system comprising a display and a touch pad, the  
3 method comprising:

4                manipulating a user interface device to cause a suitable area  
5 for receiving handwritten characters to be displayed on the display above  
6 or behind the touch pad; and

7                providing information entry on the touch pad,  
8                wherein the user interface device is not located on the  
9 display.

1        19. The method of claim 18 further comprising:  
2                manipulating the user interface device to cause the suitable  
3 area to be removed from the display.

1        20. The method of claim 18 wherein the user interface device is  
2 a mechanical switch.

1           21. The method of claim 20 wherein the mechanical switch is a  
2 squeeze switch integrated in a housing of the handheld computer system.

1           22. The method of claims 19, 20, or 21 wherein the suitable  
2 area is at least one of a pop-up graffiti area, a pictorial representation of a  
3 keyboard, an area to accept a drawing, and an area assigned for entering  
4 information into the handheld computer system.